



HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

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IM Project Seeks Executive Director

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

At the June 3 Interoperability Montana Project Directors (IMPD) meeting, members approved hiring an Executive Director to manage the IM Project. A position description is available at <http://interop.mt.gov/>.

The position also is posted at the Montana jobs site: <https://jobs.mt.gov/jobs/seeker/search/search.seek>. Type in job order number 2973341 in the search box.

Kudos to Roger Smith, MHP

By Scott Bradford, sbradford@mt.gov

The Public Safety Services Bureau (PSSB) and Lewis and Clark County would like to recognize Roger Smith, Montana Highway Patrol, for his superior effort and assistance recently. On June 11, Lewis and Clark County shut down its radio system for several hours to facilitate an upgrade of the microwave system, which allows for future expansion of the IM Project.

Lewis and Clark County reported that Roger Smith's efforts and skills were critical, especially while working under difficult conditions. A big thank you goes to Roger and all the other dedicated staff who made this transition possible and successful.

Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee

By Pete Mohan pmohan@mt.gov

The Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC) met in Helena on Wed., June 11. SIEC Chair, Dick Clark greeted members and thanked them for driving through the snow and began the meeting. The minutes of the March 12 meeting were approved.

Dick introduced Bill Fleiner, Chair of the IM Governance Committee who recapitulated a summary of changes that have occurred within the IM Project since the SIEC last met three months ago. Significant accomplishments included the IM Retreat conducted in Billings, MT for consortia members and elected officials in which the goals, objectives and progress of the IM Project were reiterated and reviewed. Additionally, the IM Project Directors (IMPD) has achieved the status of becoming a sub-grantee for grants and has adopted a new tagline to its name, as follows: Interoperability Montana: An Association of Governments. The IMPD also has changed its bylaws and governance methodology to reflect the new status. Bill reported that the IMPD has retained the services of local legal and accounting firms to ensure compliance with federal and state laws and financial requirements. In addition, the IMPD has approved a solicitation for a full time Executive Director to provide day-to-day oversight for the IMPD.

Mark Adams, Northrop Grumman, provided the group with the current status of the IM Project. Mark emphasized that the build out reflects the hard work of

the entire state from local, state, tribal, federal, and private concerns. (The entire briefing is available at: http://siec.mt.gov/2008_06_11_meeting.asp).

Sheena Wilson, Deputy Chief of Staff, Governor's Office, briefed the group on the status of compiling all agency interoperable communications legislative requests into a single document for budgeting purposes.

Chris Christensen, Public Safety Services Bureau Chief, provided the group with insight about how to support their Consortia Project Directors to assist with the IM Project build out. Additionally, Chris briefed the group on the grants and methods to leverage finances that have been and/or will be available for local jurisdictions to use to enhance their interoperability capabilities.

Dick stressed the importance of federal, tribal, state, local non-governmental partnerships. He also reiterated that the IM Project has local, regional, state, national, and international implications.

The next SIEC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, Sept. 10 in Helena.

Central Montana Consortium Meeting

By Scott Bradford sbradford@mt.gov

The Central Montana Interoperability Communications Consortium (CMICC) met in Great Falls on Wed., June 11 for its regularly scheduled monthly meeting. In addition to Project Director Cheri Kilby's report on the IM Project Directors meeting and representative Dorothy Gremaux' report on the IM Technical Committee activities, Dave Hinds, U.S. Air Force (USAF), provided the latest information on the USAF partnership and the status of site agreements. Almost all arrangements are in place and the project is proceeding well, with the exception that a comprehensive partnership agreement needs to be developed with the USAF and Interoperability Montana, much like the one first envisioned last year. Dave reported that an agreement on joint use of sites with real USAF property requires the signature of the Secretary of the USAF. This process could take up to 90 days and may affect completion of the proposed Highwood Baldy and Garneill sites.

Scott Bradford, PSSB, provided a summary of frequency licensing and acquisitions, and upcoming developments at each site. Some confusion was expressed over the needs of the Broken Pick site in Pondera County, and Scott, along with the Frequency Sub-committee, will work with LeAnn Hermance and the IM Technical Committee on this matter. The Broken Pick environmental assessment remains a priority and is anticipated to be completed this summer. Other key discussion centered around the need for consortium counties to engage in the fleet mapping process



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immediately. Additional information from the fleet mapping meeting will be distributed to members.

CMICC members decided to move future meetings to different sites within the consortium to encourage participation by responders and county commissioners. The next meeting will be held July 9, 10 am at the Police Dept. City Complex, 305 W Watson St., in Lewistown.

2008 Fire Alliance Conference

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

The Montana Fire Alliance held its 5th Annual conference in Butte on June 12-14. Speakers addressed such topics as new National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) regulations for Personal Protective Equipment, highway safety tips, and the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS). Other speakers spoke about hybrid vehicles, how to become certified as a Defensive Fire Fighter and legislative issues. In addition, motivational speaker Donna Forgy, gave a high-energy presentation on how to retain and motivate fire fighters. This conference also provided time for networking and visiting with vendors.

South Central Montana Interoperability Consortium

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

The South Central Montana Interoperability Consortium (SCMIC) met in Livingston on Wed., June 11. Board Chair Peggy Glass began the meeting with county status update reports. Ben Hess, Gallatin County, reported that the county is still working on frequencies and that work is progressing on five sites in the area.

Project Director Kerry O'Connell reported for Sweet Grass County, and indicated that a right-of-way easement is still pending for one of her sites. She also presented a comprehensive report on the last Interoperability Montana Project Director's (IMPD) meeting. She reported that the IMPD reviewed and refined the job description for the IM Executive Director position and she explained that a more thorough hiring process is now being used. Kerry is now a member of the staffing sub-committee.

Discussion took place about high winds in the Livingston area, and the need to possibly increase the wind-resistance tower specifications for that area. The group also was informed about recent events related to the new Gallatin County dispatch center. In addition, Kerry informed consortium members that the IM federal appropriation letter of support is the process of being signed by all consortium representatives.

Kerry emphasized the importance of having consortium members volunteer to serve on some of the IM sub-committees, and reminded participants that representatives to sub-committees don't also have to be formal representatives to the consortium.

Tom Smith, Northrop Grumman, reported that he and Bob McWilliams conducted an inventory of the FBI shelter that was donated to the IM Project. It is a solid concrete structure (approx. 10 X 17), but the interior needs some work. Bob will be taking his recommendations to the IM Technical Committee.

The next SCMIC meeting will be held at 10:00 am on Wed., July 9 in at the Emergency Operations Center, 219 East Tamarack, in Bozeman.

Upcoming Meetings

June 16

Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) Consortium
Bozeman • 10:00 am • City Center Motel
507 W Main St.

June 17

Western Interoperability Comm. Consortium (WICC)
Hamilton • 10:00 am • Ravalli County Courthouse
215 S. 4th St.

June 17

Finance Committee Work Session
Helena • 11:30 am – 5:00 pm
Anderson & ZurMuehlen • 828 Great Northern Blvd.

June 19

I-15/90 Corridor Consortium
Butte • 10:00 am • Chamber of Commerce
1000 George St.

June 23

IM Technical Committee (IMTC) Meeting
Helena • 9:00 am • State Capitol

June 25

Tri-County Consortium
Helena • 10:00 am
DOC Annex Conf. Rm.; Behind 515 N. Sanders St.

June 25

Eastern Tier Consortium (ETIC)
Glendive • 10:00 am
Law Enforcement Center; 440 Colorado Blvd.

June 26

Big Sky 11 Consortium
Columbus • 10:00 am • Fire Dept., 944 E Pike Ave.

June 30

IMGC Finance Sub-Committee
Helena • 9:00 am - Noon
Anderson & ZurMuehlen • 828 Great Northern Blvd.

June 30

IM Governance Committee
Helena • Noon - 5:00 pm
DOC Annex Conf. Rm.; Behind 515 N. Sanders St.

July 1

IM Project Directors (IMPD) Meeting
Helena • 9:00 am - 3:00 pm • State Capitol

July 3

Northern Tier (NTIP) • Conference Call